

## FOREIGN ETHNOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS

Few additions have been made to the foreign ethnological collections, though some specimens of interest and importance were received. Mr. B. J. L. Jukes presented a Samoan canoe 24 ft. in length. An extremely interesting collection of articles from New Guinea collected by the Resident Magistrate, Mr. C. A. W. Monckton, was presented by Mr. Philip Cooke, K.C. Ethnological specimens from Melanesia were presented by Mr. A. W. H. Wheeler. A fine and much-used kava bowl was purchased.

## CERAMIC AND OTHER COLLECTIONS

Some valuable articles of chinaware and woodwork have been donated to the Museum during the past year. A teaset of Beleckware was presented by Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Meek; articles of chinaware were presented by Mrs. J. Coombe; and a Sevres vase, presented to the New Zealand Division in the first world war, was donated by Army Headquarters. Miss Noeline Baker presented a very old carved front of an oak chest from Normandy. A large model of an East Indiaman was presented by Mr. Pat Kelleher.

## MAMMAL COLLECTION

The skeleton of the strap-toothed whale mentioned in last year's report was recovered in June, 1944. After burial in the sandhills for about ten months the entire skeleton was found to be in good order and stained a pleasant yellowish colour. When mounted it should make a striking exhibit. A goose-beak whale was reported on the Himitangi Beach in January, 1945, and Mr. Lindsay visited the locality and collected the skull. In March, 1945, the skeleton of a Pygmy Right Whale, which had been stranded on Stewart Island, was purchased. It was an adult of this peculiar species of whale, and as the specimens already in the collection are of young individuals, it makes an addition of some zoological importance.

## BIRD COLLECTION

A number of native and introduced birds accidentally killed have been received at the Museum. Two birds were stragglers from Australia, and, therefore, of some interest. In December a spine-tailed swift was found at Foxton and presented to the Museum by the finder, Mr. C. Cochran. Two days later a specimen of the Oriental Cuckoo was picked up at Takaka by Mrs. E. M. Hayter and donated to the Museum. A collection of New Zealand birds was presented by Mr. S. Harcourt, and a series from Norfolk Island by Mr. H. Marwick.

## ENTOMOLOGICAL COLLECTION

Numerous inquiries from both the public and the Services have been dealt with during the past year.

The rearrangement of the collections has continued in so far as cabinet space is available. The setting and mounting of the many foreign collections that have been received also has been continued, and the mounting of a very large collection of Lepidoptera from the Solomons area completed.

During December the Director and Mr. Salmon made an expedition to the Homer district in company with Mr. G. Howes and Mr. M. Smith, both of Dunedin. Extensive collections of insects were made for the Museum and a number of new species secured. Ultimately these will be described in papers under preparation by Mr. Salmon and Mr. G. Howes.

During March Mr. Salmon made an expedition through the North Island central districts and North Auckland. This was linked with the mosquito-control work of the Health Department, and was made in company with Mr. W. J. Phillipps. In addition to the mosquito work some very rare and valuable insects were collected for the Museum, in particular a rare Phasmid from the Waipoua Forest required by Mr. Salmon for the completion of his work on the New Zealand Phasmidæ. Leaf-mould samples were collected for the extraction of Collembola and other small insects and arachnids.

The large amount of literature regularly received by the Entomological Department in the form of reprints always has presented a problem in classification and storage. During the year a start has been made with a complete classification of this material, using quarto-size cardboard boxes which fit the bookshelves. All papers are being card-indexed.

Accessions for the year include approximately 1,100 specimens of Lepidoptera from the Pacific islands presented by Mr. M. E. P. Hutchison, Airman, of Wellington; 2 specimens of *Choragus subcaucus* from Mr. E. S. Gourlay, of Nelson; 2 specimens of *Mecodema allani* from Mr. A. E. Fairburn, of Whangarei; and from Mr. R. R. Forster, R.N.Z.N., approximately 1,000 specimens of Coleoptera, 200 specimens of Hymenoptera, 3 boxes of specimens of Lepidoptera, and 177 tubes, together with 9 jars of spirit specimens comprising approximately 2,200 specimens covering Collembola, spiders, opiliones, orthoptera, hymenoptera, and diptera from the Pacific islands.

Based on the Museum collections, two papers were published in the Records of the Dominion Museum.

## BOTANICAL COLLECTIONS

This department of the Museum has been without staff for several years, and the only attention it has received has been given at irregular intervals by the Director. Plant collections are bound to deteriorate if not regularly disinfected; but even this is a long process, as over two thousand boxes have to be examined and treated separately. The appointment of a properly qualified botanist is therefore most urgent and should be given first consideration when the shortage of man-power diminishes.

The main addition to the herbarium during the year was a fairly complete collection of the plants of the Upper Hollyford and Milford Sound districts made by the Director in December, 1944. The expedition was arranged by the Museum, the members of the party being the Director, Mr. Salmon, and two entomologists from Dunedin. A small house at the junction of the Homer and Hollyford Rivers was kindly lent by the Public Works Department. From here excursions were made as far west as the head of Milford Sound and as far east as the Livingstone Range. Bad weather and the persistence of snow prevented an examination of the mountains above 4,000 ft. altitude.